[Shri Vishwa Bandhu Gupta]

going to stretch the security to the point that of policeman has to be provided for every single citizen of the country, I think that is an impossibility and that would be counter-productive. Therefore, when we look at the question of security, I think the Minister of State for Internal Security has clearly enunciated measures that have been taken by Delhi police. Many loopholes have been plugged and a system has been set up where we are alive to the situation and react to it. Weapons have to be modernised. Mr. Kalmadi mentioned about 303 rifles. Even today this is one of our best weapons, General Aurora would know. That does not mean that it does not need to be supplemented by more sophisticated weapons. This 303 rifles is a very good weapon to use in a situation of that kind.

SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH AURORA: This will be effective only when the person is trained to shoot quickly.

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA: I see the point that training should be improved and they should always be alert. I think, everybody would agree with this. (*Time-bell rings*) Sir, I will take a minute or two more.

The other point which was made by my friend was about Airports, for example. Airports are vulnerable. Look at the size of the airports. Look at the people coming in. There are a large number of people coming in and going from here. Therefore, there are security risks. When you are talking about security of vital installations, again, I would say, there is no perfect security system as such in which there can be total security. Shri Jaswant Singh mentioned the point about clearing the roads. The road has to be cleared when a VIP is coming. On the one hand, you want security. This means, no undesirable person, no unknown person—I would not say, 'undesirable person', unless you find out—should be there obstructing the road. This is counterproductive to security. Therefore, I do not see any point in his stressing that people should not be asked to go off the road. In fact, they themselves can keep off the road at that time. When the police wants people to go off the road when a VIP is passing through, and when people are told by the security men they should move off the road. For example, when a fire engine is passing on a road, it is well-known that people who are driving on the road are not supposed to come in front of the fire engine; they have to get to a side, they have to get off the road. This is a standard system. There is nothing wrong. While I agree with the point that police should be polite and courteous towards the citizens of the country, there is no harm if citizens are asked to go off the road, or they themselves go off the road whenever required.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I think, the measures enunciated by the hon. Minister of Internal Security in the statement which he has made are quite adequate. Of course, there may be some areas where there can be improvements. I am sure, he will look at those points, like, for example, training, alertness etc. But certainly, everycare has been taken to have adequate security and I do not see any new point in the Calling Attention Motion which has been raised.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Chidambaram.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, may I make the statement which I promised to make in the morning?

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Regarding the incident which took place on 25th July, 1986 in District Faridkot (Punjab)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir....

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, will you allow clarifications?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir,

It is with a great sense of sorrow and anguish I have to inform this House that today at about 6 A.M. when a Deluxe bus of the PEPSU Roadways Transport Corporation proceeding from Muktsar to Chandigarh reached near Village Labaniawali, some unidentified extremists who were travelling in the same bus shot dead 13 passengers and injured 7 others of one community. After committing the crime, the culprits fled away. Senior civil and police officers have rushed to the scene of incident, and intensive combing operations by para-military forces and the police are underway to nab the culprits. District authorities and the police all over the State have been put on maximum alert guard against the outbreak of trouble at other sensitive places in the State. D. G. Police, who was at Delhi for a meeting, has also rushed toMuktsar to personally supervise the coming operations and other necessary law and order measures in the area. It is learnt that the Governor Punjab and the Chief Minister are visiting the place of occurrence at Muktsar town during the course of the day. The Home Minister is also visiting the affected area today and has left Delhi by special plane. He will have discussions with the Chief Minister to review the situation arising out of today's incident and to further tighten security measures in the State.

I am confident that this House will join me in condemning such acts of violence which create disharmony and misunderstanding amongst different sections of society and in conveying our deep sympathies to the bereaved families. While authorities are making all efforts to apprehend the culprits, I would appeal to all communities and all sections of public opinion to strive and maintain communal harmony and peace and continue to work together for defeating the evil designs of the terrorists and anti-national forces.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Sir, I join the hon. Minister in condemning the killing but I would like to seek a few clarifications. Sir, our warning that a slight lull in the activities of terrorists should not make the Government or the security forces complacent was not heeded. After intensification in the anti-terrorist campaign by the security forces in Amritsar and Gurdaspur it was expected that the terrorists will strike at some other place. Four disricts of Punjab are posing problems. Apart from Gurdaspur and Amritsar the two other districts are Kapurthala and Ferozepur. This bus was coming from Amritsar. Innocent passengers were taken out of the bus, passengers belonging to one community. This is a selective killing with the purpose to incite the people, but the killing was done in Kapurthala district. (*Interruptions*). Yes, it was in Faridkot district. I stand corrected. I would like to know whether there was any security guard with the bus. The bus was coming from Muktsar. It was passing through Faridkot district. I do not know whether buses are still allowed to ply in Punjab without security guards.

Secondly, I would like to know, where did these terrorists board the bus? Did they board the bus at Muktsar itself? Was there any checking? They came with pistols. They were armed. Why were they not prevented from boarding the bus?

Thirdly, Sir, is there any patrolling of the main roads, thoroughfares? This is one of the main roads in Punjab. If my information is correct, the deluxe bus was to come to Delhi. That is why we have been damanding deployment of army. Even now for patrolling purposes army can be utilised. The Government has been patting its own back by claiming that the terrorists are on the run. I know this is too serious a matter and I do not want to say things which might hurt our friends on the side opposite, but obviously there is somebody masterminding the entire operation. While you concentrate on Amritsar and Gurdarspur, they strike in other districts.

Sir, I join in the Minister's appeal that there should be perfect communal harmony. That is what the terrorists do not want. But these killings must stop and I

[Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee]

would like to have satisfactory replies from the hon. Minister about the small points which have led to this bigger tragedy. In Krishnanagar only ten persons were killed and here in this case the number of those killed is 13. This is the highest number.

SHRI SUSHIL CHAND MOHUNTA (Haryana): Sir, this is a very grave tragedy and I join Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, hon. Member, in expressing my sorrow at what has happened. I also join the appeal of the hon. Minister asking the people to maintain communal harmony. But one thing clearly stands out. This is not the first time. Every time when the Government has proclaimed from house-tops that they are in control and command of the situation, that the terrorists are on the run, that they are being fast liquidated, we always come across one or many incidents of this nature.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please put your questions.

SHRI SUSHIL CHAND MOHUNTA: Sir, I am just putting two or three facts which are apparent. Every time they proclaim that the terrorists have been nabbed, their organisations have been busted, but we find from press reports thot no particular weapons normally used by terrorists are recovered—i.e. sten-guns. When no such weapons are recovered, How can you say that you have nabbed the hard-core? I would like to know if you have recovered any sten-guns during this time from the terrorists you have nabbed.

Now regarding the incident, everybody knows that one strategy of the terrorists is to demoralise the people of one community, to instil fear in them and also to create communal disharmony so that the rate of the people of one community trying to leave Punjab should be accelerated, that they should feel quite unsafe in Punjab and that they should not stay there. What has the Government done in this matter? The buses are running. Is there any checking in the buses at the places where the major bus stands are? Is there any regular patrolling done on the highways and what is the distance and time-lag between one patrol van and another in covering a particular point. If one patrol van just passes through a point and another does not have to come through for another 12 or 14 hours, we can well imagine that there is sufficient time for the terrorists to play their game in that period. I would also like to know whether the adjoining areas have been properly combed and whether any, and if so, how many, of the sensitive villages nearabout and outside have been identified where terrorists do take shelter so that a watch can be kept over these villages. Is this situation within the notice of the Government or not? Merely trying to take credit for a little lull which has taken place will not do; I think the Government should take responsibility for a tragedy like this.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, while associating myself in expressing my sorrow and sympathy towards those who have been killed and also in appealing to maintain communal harmony, I would like to put two questions. In the statement the Miniser has said that some unidentified terrorists who were travelling by the same bus shot dead 13 and injured 7 others of the community. I would like to know how many passengers of that community were travelling in the same bus and out of them if any passenger either escaped death or injury. I would like to know if the Minister has got any details on this.

Another thing I would like to know from the Minister is, it is well known that the whole of that area is troubled area. Daily some killing or the other is going on. I would like to know whether Government has given any instructions to the concerned authorities to see that those who board a bus come without weapons. Or do they allow even persons carrying weapons? It is stated that they shot dead these persons. Naturally they must have carried the weapons with them while boarding the bus. Is there any such

arrangement to check the passengers that they do not carry any weapons while travelling? Also how many unidentified terrorists were there in the bus? The Minister has said "some". Whether they were two, three, four or ten. He has not said that. Some identified extremists who were travelling in the same bus, shot dead 13 passengers. I would like to know how many persons were carrying weapons.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO (Jammu and Kashmir): Sir, on my own behalf and on behalf of my party, Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, I associate myself with the Minister in condemning this dastardly act of violence by the terrorists. There are no words with me to condemn this carnage. I would only like the Minister kindly to give a few replies to my queries:

Number one, it is written that some identified extremists were travelling in the bus. I would like to know the number of those unidentified extremists who were travelling.

Number two, we really have to gain by experience of the strategy of the extremists which has to be tackled from day to day. But will the Minister assure us on the floor of this House—what has happened so far has happened, and we do not want to go into that—that from now on he will deploy, the State Government will deploy, forces to ensure, before boarding of passengers at the bus terminals that no unscrupulous elements are boarding the bus with weapons. This assurance must be given to us for future. And instructions may be given by him both to the State Governments and the CRPF and other authorities in this behalf. Will you tell us in this regard what long-range methods that you want to adopt, that the Government wants to adopt, to stop such a carnage and such incidents in the future?

Lastly, Sir, I associate myself with him and have all the sympathies for those who have been killed in this tragedy.

Thank you.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am sure that the hon. Members will kindly appreciate the handicap which I have in answering the clarifications which the hon. Members have sought on the matter which happened only this morning and about which we have received information from the State Government. I have conveyed to this hon. House all the information that we have received from the State Government. The Home Minister who went this morning by a special plane, has not yet returned. The D.G. of Police who was here, has also gone with the Home Minister. Therefore, I would most humbly request you as well as the hon. Members to bear with me. If I do not have the information, I do not wish to speculate on the points on which the hon. Members have quite rightly asked clarifications.

Sir, the bus, from the information received by us, originated at Muktsar at 5 a.m. today, and it was bound for Chandigarh. I do not have information that the bus was bound for Delhi, and, therefore, as at present advised, I cannot accept the suggestion that was made that the bus was proceeding to Delhi.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: That is not very important.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: It is not important. But since you made the point, I thought I should say about it.

Sir, the incident occurred at 5-58 a.m. near a village known as Labaniawali. We do not have information about how many extremists were involved in the crime. We do not also have information about the total complement of passengers in the bus and how many belonged to a community and how many belonged to other communities. But we have information that thirteen were killed, seven others were injured and the injured have been taken to the hospital.

Hon. Members said what are the steps being taken.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Was there a security guard in the bus?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am answering. I have tried to find out whether there was any specific information about the security guard. Except that we have general knowledge that these buses are provided with security guards, I cannot say specifically now whether this bus had a security guard. If I say one way or other, I might turn out to be giving wrong information. I will first collect the information and then give it to the House.

I would again most humbly request you to appreciate our difficulty. This is a matter falling squarely within the jurisdiction of the State Government. They are primarily responsible for security of bus terminals, security of their own State buses and for the security of passengers. It is not correct to say that the Central Government has become complacent, because there has been a lull. On the contrary we have been impressing upon the State Government to maintain a constant vigil and I do not think that the Central Government can be accused of having lowered its vigil in the matter.

I do not think we have made any tall or boastful claims in the past. We have always said we are doing our best to help and aid the State Government in fighting terrorists, in fighting the extremists and trying to bring the situation under control.

As I said at the outset we have to only give information which we know is correct and which we receive from authentic sources. I have sincerely given all the information that Government has received. I concede that there are some questions which arise. I concede that we must get this information. We will get this information when the Home Minister returns later today.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: And give it to the House.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Yes, Sir. I think the Home Minister will come to the House. We are subject to this House.

One thing I would like to say. Whatever we do, the terrorist has the advantage of choosing the place and the time of attack. It is not a regular war. The terrorist chooses the place and time of the attack. I entirely share the hon. Members' observations that their objective is to create communal disharmony. So, today we must guard against that grave danger spreading through Punjab. We must all join together in appealing for communal harmony and reiterate our resolve to put down terrorism and extremism.

I would once again request the hon. Members to bear with me. We will give more information to the House when the Home Minister returns.

I would request hon. Members to join me once again in conveying our sympathies to the bereaved families and to condemning in unreserved terms the diabolical attempt of terrorists not only to spread terrorism, but also to spread communal disharmony.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: One point which I asked has not been answered. My point was whether the people were allowed to board the bus with weapons. He has not assured that people will not be allowed to board the bus with weapons. He has not said anything. That requires further information.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister may now reply to the calling Attention Motion.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE INADEQUATE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AT STRATEGIC AND SENSITIVE PUBLIC PLACES IN DELHI—CONTD. ..

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, as I understood, the Calling Attention Motion was to invite the attention of the Government to inadequate security arrangements at strategic and sensitive public